



# Allocations Policy

|                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
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## **1. What this policy is about and why we need it.**

This Policy provides a framework that we allocate our vacant general needs and housing for older people properties, covering both social and affordable rents. It does not apply to allocations to market rent, shared ownership, rent to home buy or leasehold properties, or specialist supported housing which is subject to its own independent allocations process. Mutual exchanges, succession or any other form of assignment are also not covered by this policy.

We provide a wide range of quality affordable housing for rent, for people whose personal circumstances fit the criteria of the organisation's charitable status. The policy sets out the eligibility that applies to all applicants. We currently have homes throughout the East Midlands, South Yorkshire, and the Humber regions.

We do not operate our waiting list or register. Our approach is to work with local authority (LA) partners to allocate our vacant properties via their Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. Each CBL scheme that we operate within has its own allocations policy, which sets out its own criteria for qualification and priority. In some areas we operate local lettings plans and arrangements.

Whilst we do not work to one single CBL scheme, this policy ensures we meet the objectives of;

- Compliance with current legislation, regulatory requirements and good practice.
- Making best use of stock.
- Ensuring lettings are fair and efficient, with consideration to property attributes, household need and neighbourhood demography.
- Making decisions which support the sustainability of tenancies and communities within the areas that we operate.
- Offering choice to applicants whilst ensuring priority is based on assessment of need.
- Working with partners to ensure that we meet agreed nomination targets in relation to the percentage of properties offered, enabling the partner to fulfil their statutory duties.
- Ensuring our approach is consistent, transparent, and accountable.

## **2. Who does this policy apply to?**

This policy applies to the following people;

- All people involved in the allocation of properties
- Current tenants seeking to move
- LA partners operating CBL schemes which advertise our properties
- Applicants of our LA partners' CBL schemes who are applying for an Acis property

## **3. Our policy**

### **3.1 Eligibility criteria**

To be eligible for a tenancy with us, all applicants must;

- Be over 18 years old, or over 16 with an adult guarantor who will hold the tenancy on trust for the applicant until the applicant turns 18
- Have the legal right to rent in the UK
- Not hold another tenancy unless it will be given up as part of being rehoused.

Further information on the right to rent can be found via the government website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

### **3.2 Choice Based Lettings**

Our vacant properties are usually advertised through the relevant LA CBL system. CBL is a system where customers express interest ('bid') on available properties of their choice. Each individual CBL scheme itself will be a customer's route to applying for housing with us, to which we will provide adequate and appropriate signposting.

It is recognised that generally each scheme operates on the key principle of advertising all available properties and ranks applicants based on their priority following an assessment of need.

Subject to eligibility, customers will need to register with the LA in the area where they are seeking to bid for a home. Offers of accommodation will be made in accordance with eligibility and specific applicant requirements.

Each LA is responsible for managing their own suspensions, appeals and complaints in respect of their CBL system. We may subscribe to further schemes in additional LA areas as we continue to develop in new areas.

Section 9, Appendix item 1, shows the CBL schemes in which we currently operate.

### **3.3 Transfers, direct lets and management moves**

Existing tenants may apply via CBL to transfer to alternative accommodation which is more suited to their needs. Qualification between each CBL scheme may vary in respect of the minimum period of time an applicant needs to have lived at their property, however it is recognised that this is generally at least 12 months. The CBL provider is responsible for assessing these applications in line with their normal application process.

In some areas, we have the ability to allocate a proportion of properties outside of CBL. Whilst our approach is that the majority of empty properties will be made available for letting via CBL, it is recognised there may be occasions where we will let properties outside of CBL as either a direct let or management move.

Where we advertise and/or allocate properties outside of CBL schemes, steps will be taken to ensure compliance with this policy and have specific regard to our eligibility criteria set out at section 3.1. We will also ensure consideration is given to the best use of stock, housing need, the requirements set out in Consumer Standards, and compliance with our charitable objectives. In every case, where we look to let a property outside of CBL, prior sign-off by a Neighbourhood Manager is required (either in principle or for the specific letting).

Our approach to management moves is set out in section 9, Appendix item 2.

### **3.4 Allocations to employees, board members and their relatives**

Board members, employees and their close relatives are able to apply for housing via any CBL scheme. Any decision to allocate a property to a board member, employee or close relative must have prior approval by the Chief Executive or in his absence (or inability, for example due to a conflict of interest) an Executive Director. The interests of the applicant must be disclosed.

### **3.5 Local Lettings Policies**

We have local lettings policies (LLPs) in place in various specific areas. Implementation of new LLPs are often given consideration with new developments, but consideration may also be given to implement one in existing areas. A new LLP should be agreed through consultation with the LA and approved by the relevant Head of Service.

Generally, the aim of introducing LLPs is to respond to specific local circumstances within a defined geographical area and to allow a certain level of flexibility in order to assist in meeting specific company objectives, predominantly relating to the sustainability of tenancies and communities. Where in operation, LLPs will take precedence over any allocations policies for that area.

When creating a LLP, consideration will be given to any relevant statutory obligations. All LLPs should set out any eligibility criteria and objectives, have consideration towards impacts and refer to monitoring, reviewing and reporting. They should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and do not unnecessarily restrict access to housing.

Where LLPs have additional selection criteria, it may result in allocations not being determined in strict accordance with an applicant's basic priority through the CBL scheme. For clarity, properties subject to a LLP will be labelled as such when advertised. Our Local Lettings Policies will usually involve the use of Starter Tenancies (see section 3.11).

Section 9, Appendix item 1, shows the areas where we currently have LLPs in place across our stock at the time of agreeing this policy.

### **3.6 Property eligibility**

Our preference is for properties to be allocated to persons requiring the size of property that is available, and not to encourage overcrowding or under-occupation. Whilst LA's allocation policies will generally align with this, nominations may occasionally be received that would result in such and these will be subject to individual consideration. In all cases we will ensure best use of stock and take a proactive approach to address overcrowding and under-occupation.

Age designated accommodation will normally only be allocated in line with the applicable age criteria. Where an application is considered for an applicant below the age criteria, the application should be supported by the relevant documentation or representation to ensure the need is aligned with the accommodation. Such cases will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, this assessment should consider the type of accommodation and applicant need, alongside the risks and impacts of the allocation.

### **3.7 Adapted properties**

Properties which are specially adapted will be advertised through CBL, and the advert will clearly stipulate that priority will be given to those with a need for such type of property in order to ensure the best use of stock. Where a suitable applicant is not identified through CBL, we may liaise with agencies to identify suitable applicants.

A proactive approach to letting properties with adaptations will be adopted, and it is expected that LAs will provide the necessary support to ensure the successful letting. Properties will only be made available for letting to those other than with a specific need once all possible avenues for a suitable applicant have been exhausted.

### **3.8 Housing of offenders**

We aim to create safe, secure and sustainable communities. LA's will determine the eligibility of offenders, and we will work with the LA where there may be risk requiring further consideration.

Where offenders that are subject to a multi-agency public protection arrangement (MAPPA) are being nominated, the LA must confirm that they have investigated the risks associated to the housing of the applicant and can demonstrate the suitability of the property and location, before we will make a formal offer of housing to the applicant.

Examples of information we could request to assess risk include;

- Detailed risk assessment, with specific consideration being given towards the risk of reoffending
- Details of any support, supervision or care requirements, along with agreed packages of the same that are being provided
- Monitoring arrangements
- Relevant contact details for all involved agencies

We reserve the right to refuse nominations where support or care requirements cannot be met or sustained, or where a risk assessment would suggest that the offer of accommodation to the offender would not be suitable, or appropriate, in our opinion.

### **3.9 Grounds for refusing an application or nomination**

We may refuse nominations where at least one of the grounds set out at Appendix 2 applies to the applicant or a member of their household.

We will consider all relevant factors before reaching a decision to refuse an application. We acknowledge that there may sometimes be exceptional circumstances, and any decision to override the refusal criteria will be subject to approval by a Neighbourhood Manager.

In such circumstances, and where considered appropriate, we may seek supporting representation from a current/former landlord or a support agency and assess the applicant's ability to sustain the proposed tenancy.

### **3.10 Suspensions and exclusions**

Each individual CBL scheme will operate its own suspension and exclusion policy. Detailed reference to this will be contained within each policy and applicants should check with the relevant LA where clarification is required.

### **3.11 References**

All nominations through a CBL scheme will require a satisfactory reference, which should be from the applicant's most recent landlord, wherever possible. Where a reference is not provided, we will take reasonable steps to obtain further information from the LA, applicant and most recent landlord prior to any decision being made. Where an applicant currently holds a tenancy with us, any offer of alternative accommodation will be subject to a successful property inspection. Reference should be made to section 3.9 where an inspection identifies rechargeable damage or property condition concerns.

Information obtained from references will be used to demonstrate an applicant's ability to pay rent and show how a tenancy has been conducted. We will also use this information to highlight any additional support requirements.

### **3.12 Tenancies and rents**

Starter tenancies will be offered to all new tenants to both general needs and housing for older people properties unless a stock transfer agreement prohibits the use of them. Where a stock transfer agreement or Section 106 agreement prohibits the use, then starter tenancies will only be issued in areas where this is specified in a local lettings policy as agreed with the LA. Further details of all our tenancy agreements are contained within the Tenancy Management Policy. Rents charged for properties will be in accordance with the Rent Standard.

### **3.13 Appeals and complaints**

Any applicant dissatisfied with a decision about their housing application has the right to appeal. The relevant LA will handle appeals which relate to the housing register or a housing application. Where an appeal relates to a decision we have made, the way we have handled a nomination, or the way we have treated an applicant, we will deal with them in accordance with our Customer Feedback Policy.

### **4. How we will monitor this policy**

This policy will be monitored to ensure that it is delivering its objectives. This will be done using data collated in respect of allocations, demography and diversity, along with tenancy sustainment figures and the auditing of non CBL allocations.

### **5. Procedures and other documents that link into this policy**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures;

Tenancy Management Policy  
Tenancy Fraud Procedure  
Tenancy Commencement Procedure

### **6. Links to other policies, legislation and/or regulations**

Policies, legislation and/or regulation that links to this Policy are listed below:

Data Protection Act 2018  
Equality Act 2010  
General Data Protection Regulations  
Housing Act 1996  
Housing Act 2004  
Housing Act 1988  
Housing Act 1985  
Homelessness Act 2002  
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017  
Immigration Act 2014  
Localism Act 2011  
Renters' Rights Act 2025  
Sex Offenders Act 1997

Statutory guidance: Allocation of Accommodation (2012), Providing Social Housing for Local People (2013), Right to Move (2015) & Improving Access to Social Housing (2018)

### **7. When this policy will be reviewed**

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure compliance with current legislation and its requirement to meet the needs of local housing issues in all authority areas.

### **8. Jargon buster**

| Reference | Definition                                 |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------|
| CBL       | Choice Based Lettings                      |
| LA        | Local Authority                            |
| LLP       | Local Lettings Policy                      |
| MAPP      | multi-agency public protection arrangement |

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1. CBL Partner Schemes, Nomination Agreements & LLP's

| Ashfield District Council |                                                                             |                         |   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                       | <a href="http://www.amhomefinder.co.uk/">http://www.amhomefinder.co.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement      | Y                                                                           | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council |                                                                                                                         |                         |   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                                   | <a href="https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/looking-for-a-home/">https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/looking-for-a-home/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement                  | Y                                                                                                                       | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| Bassetlaw District Council |                                                                                                                               |                         |   |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                        | <a href="http://www.a1homefinder.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/273.aspx">http://www.a1homefinder.org.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/273.aspx</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement       | Y                                                                                                                             | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| Bolsover District Council |                                                                                                                                                   |                         |   |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                       | <a href="https://bolsoverhomes.bolsover.gov.uk/oalive/ibxmlpr.p?docid=home">https://bolsoverhomes.bolsover.gov.uk/oalive/ibxmlpr.p?docid=home</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement      | Y                                                                                                                                                 | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| City of Lincoln Council |                                                                                   |                         |   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                     | <a href="http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk/">http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement    | Y                                                                                 | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| Doncaster Council    |                                                                                           |                         |   |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                  | <a href="http://www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk/">http://www.doncasterhomechoice.co.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement | N                                                                                         | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| East Lindsey District Council |                                                                                             |                         |   |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                           | <a href="https://e-lindsey.housingjigsaw.co.uk/">https://e-lindsey.housingjigsaw.co.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement          | N                                                                                           | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| Mansfield District Council |                                                                             |                         |   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                        | <a href="http://www.amhomefinder.co.uk/">http://www.amhomefinder.co.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement       | Y                                                                           | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| Newark and Sherwood District Council |                                                                                                                                             |                         |   |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                                  | <a href="https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/applyforacouncilproperty/">https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/applyforacouncilproperty/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement                 | N                                                                                                                                           | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| North East Derbyshire District Council |                                                                                                         |                         |   |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                                    | <a href="https://www.rykneldhomes.org.uk/find-a-home/">https://www.rykneldhomes.org.uk/find-a-home/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement                   | Y                                                                                                       | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| North East Lincolnshire |                                                                                         |                         |   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                     | <a href="https://www.homechoice.lincs.org.uk/">https://www.homechoice.lincs.org.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement    | N                                                                                       | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| North Kesteven District Council |                                                                                   |                         |   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                             | <a href="http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk/">http://www.lincshomefinder.co.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement            | N*                                                                                | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| North Lincolnshire Council |                                                                                       |                         |   |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                        | <a href="https://www.homechoicelincs.org.uk/">https://www.homechoicelincs.org.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement       | N                                                                                     | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council |                                                                                                                                       |                         |   |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                                    | <a href="https://www.therham.gov.uk/housing-advice/look-council-home">https://www.therham.gov.uk/housing-advice/look-council-home</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement                   | Y                                                                                                                                     | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| Rushcliffe Borough Council |                                                                                                   |                         |   |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                        | <a href="https://www.homesearch-rushcliffe.org.uk/">https://www.homesearch-rushcliffe.org.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement       | Y                                                                                                 | Local Lettings Policies | N |

| Sheffield City Council |                                                                                                   |                         |   |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                    | <a href="https://www.sheffieldpropertyshop.org.uk/">https://www.sheffieldpropertyshop.org.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement   | N                                                                                                 | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

| West Lindsey District Council |                                                                                               |                         |   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CBL                           | <a href="https://homechoice.west-lindsey.gov.uk/">https://homechoice.west-lindsey.gov.uk/</a> |                         |   |
| Nomination Agreement          | Y                                                                                             | Local Lettings Policies | Y |

\*There are individual agreements in place for certain schemes but no overarching agreement.

## **Appendix 2. Management Moves**

Management moves are primarily used to address urgent housing need and are normally considered under the following categories.

- Urgent risk - Such as domestic abuse or hate crime
- Medical or welfare - Where a severe medical, health, or welfare issue would be improved through more suitable accommodation
- Overcrowding or under-occupation - To proactively and effectively manage housing stock in such cases

Considering a management move requires the relevant supporting evidence to ensure best use of available stock. Examples of supporting evidence may include, but are not limited to;

- Multi agency risk assessment or police report supporting the risk of remaining at the current property
- GP, Social Services, or relevant professional indicating a move would benefit the health or wellbeing of a resident and that remaining at the current property would directly affect their health or wellbeing
- Evidence of household composition or length of residency to support the need to move to a property of a different size

All management move requests should be submitted on the management move form, together with the supporting documents, to a Neighbourhood Manager for consideration.

In cases of multiple management move requests, the principles of the LA should be applied to determine priority. This approach ensures properties are allocated in a fair and transparent way and that the needs of all applicants considered.

Not all management move requests are able to be progressed. Where a request is refused, the reason will be confirmed to the person(s) seeking the move.

### Appendix 3. Grounds for refusing an application or nomination

- Have had an unspent conviction, or caution, for an offence which could make them unsuitable for housing or pose risk to the community. Examples of such could include public order offences, nuisance, vandalism, drug dealing, burglary, theft, violence, hate crime etc.
- They have been evicted, have had an injunction or possession order made against them (suspended or outright) or legal action has been commenced against them for anti-social behaviour, criminal behaviour, or tenancy related breaches, by either us or any other landlord, or where it would be seen to be appropriate and proportionate for us to take such action should they have held a tenancy with us at that time.
- Where they have been a perpetrator of acts such as domestic violence, harassment or any form of unacceptable behaviour, nuisance or annoyance (although this list is not exhaustive), but no legal or enforcement action has yet been taken.
- There is evidence of violence, harassment, intimidation, or threats of the same, towards our employees or contractors, or those of the LA, previous landlord or any agency.
- Where the applicant or LA do not provide, or refuse to provide, satisfactory documentation or information in support of the relevant nomination.
- There are current or former arrears of rent, service charges, recharges, court costs or other housing related debt. Each case of tenancy related debt will be considered on a case-by-case basis with consideration being given to the current level of the debt and why that debt occurred. When reviewing each case, the following criteria will be considered;
  - All tenancy related debt which has occurred within the last six years will be considered. Any debt that is older than six years will be considered only where we have actively pursued the debt within the last six years.
  - In respect of existing tenancies – We would generally expect any debt to be cleared before a transfer is agreed, or a repayment agreement to be in place to clear the debt within the first thirteen weeks after the proposed transfer. This will also include any pending costs which occur as a result of the proposed move, such as rechargeable repairs or damage at the existing property. Any court order that is tenancy related would preclude a transfer other than in exceptional circumstances.
  - Any deviation from this criteria would need to be agreed by a Neighbourhood Manager and would only be considered in exceptional circumstances.